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RECORDS MANAGEMENT
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Restricted

October 31, 1950

To: Heads of Federal Agencies

Subject: Protection of Indispensable Operating Records for Emergency Use

The protection of key records, library collections, and other documents that are indispensable for carrying on essential Government operations under emergency wartime conditions has for some time been of concern to operating agencies in the three branches of the Government. Security microfilming as well as a variety of other protective measures have, of course, already been planned and effected in a number of instances. In order to facilitate this work, an over-all planning and coordinating project has been assigned by the National Security Resources Board to this Administration and is under way in the National Archives and Records Service. The objectives of this project are first, to assure that effective agency plans are formulated and second, to determine the extent to which certain services and facilities such as microfilming, storage, etc., may be advisable.

It is, I believe, highly desirable at this time to have a Government-wide estimate of the situation with respect to documentary protection, and so I am asking the head of each agency (1) to undertake at once a critical survey of protective plans and measures in his agency, (2) to launch additional measures to cope with any deficiencies that may be apparent, and (3) to submit to the Archivist of the United States a written progress and status report (a) summarizing the plans made and measures undertaken, (b) specifying the name of the official in charge of the planning activity, (c) indicating the degree of completeness of the planning, and (d) outlining problems or recommendations that call for Government-wide action. An outline of suggested minimum standards in an agency's documentary protection program is enclosed. The report for your agency should reach the Archivist by December 15, 1950, so that if any supplemental appropriations or other legislative action on a Government-wide basis are necessary, there will be time to assemble the necessary data for consideration by the Congress.

Any inquiries that may arise concerning the report requested above or in the formulation of additional plans for protection may be referred to Mr. Martin P. Claussen (Room 104, National Archives Building, Telephone - Code 163, Extension 5185) of the staff of the National Archives and Records Service, who is in immediate charge of the project on documentary protection.

Jess Larson

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REMARKS:

Returning the memo which was borrowed from you this afternoon. An additional copy is attached. Appreciate very much the help you've extended to us.

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